

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF KENT

**IN RE: ASSIGNMENT OF CASES
IN THE FAMILY DIVISION**

**LOCAL AMINISTRATIVE
ORDER: 2004-09**

At a session of said Court, held in the Kent County Courthouse
in the City of Grand Rapids, in said County on September 10, 2004

Present: HON. PAUL J. SULLIVAN
Chief Circuit Judge

WHEREAS MCLA 600.1023 requires that all pending matters involving the same family be assigned, to the extent practicable, to the same judge; and in accordance with Section II.B. of this Court's Family Court Plan as adopted in Administrative Order 2003-010J; and

WHEREAS this order will clarify and make consistent the process of case assignment in the Family Division with the "one family, one judge" rule;

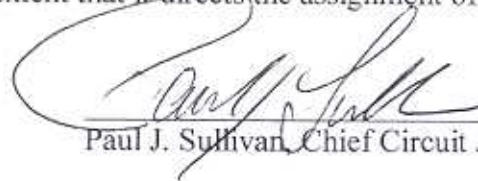
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the following shall be the procedure for judicial case assignment in domestic relations cases and proceedings under the juvenile code as listed in MCR 8.117(A)(6) and (7):

1. Membership in the same family will be determined through the identity of the mother.
2. Whether or not there is a previous case involving the same family shall be determined at the time that a new case is initiated through a search of the mother's name.
3. If there is a previous case, the same judge shall be assigned to the new case, provided that there has been judicial involvement during the preceding two years. "Judicial involvement" does not include
 - A. Proceedings to collect past due child support initiated by the Friend of the Court; or
 - B. A reassignment of the case, without further action, due to LAO 2003-07J, dated June 16, 2003.
4. If more than one judge has had involvement with the family during the previous two years, the case shall be assigned to the judge on the most recent case.
5. If there is no previous / pending case with judicial involvement during the last two years, the case shall be assigned randomly to a judge of the family division.

6. This LAO will not pertain to DO and PH case types. All DO and PH cases shall be randomly assigned except in cases where previous judicial involvement existed between the parties.
7. If, after assignment, the judge assigned to the case determines that the case should have been assigned to another judge by virtue of this procedure, the judge assigned to the case shall prepare and submit an order of reassignment, setting forth the specific reason for said reassignment, to the Chief Judge for signature.

This order supercedes LAO 2003-07J, to the extent that it ~~directs~~ the assignment of new cases.

Date: 09/13/04



Paul J. Sullivan, Chief Circuit Judge